

Doggett  
Donnelly  
Doyle  
Edwards (MD)  
Edwards (TX)  
Ellison  
Ellsworth  
Emanuel  
Emerson  
Engel  
English (PA)  
Eshoo  
Etheridge  
Farr  
Fattah  
Filner  
Forbes  
Fortenberry  
Foster  
Frank (MA)  
Gerlach  
Giffords  
Gilchrest  
Gillibrand  
Gonzalez  
Goode  
Goodlatte  
Gordon  
Graves  
Green, Al  
Green, Gene  
Grijalva  
Gutierrez  
Hall (NY)  
Hall (TX)  
Hare  
Harman  
Hastings (FL)  
Hayes  
Heller  
Hereth Sandlin  
Higgins  
Hill  
Hinchey  
Hinojosa  
Hirono  
Hodes  
Holden  
Holt  
Honda  
Hooley  
Hoyer  
Hulshof  
Inlee  
Israel  
Jackson (IL)  
Jackson-Lee  
(TX)  
Jefferson  
Johnson (GA)  
Johnson (IL)  
Johnson, E. B.  
Jones (NC)  
Jones (OH)  
Kagen  
Kanjorski  
Kaptur  
Keller  
Kennedy  
Kildee  
Kilpatrick

## NAYS—146

Aderholt  
Akin  
Alexander  
Bachmann  
Bachus  
Barrett (SC)  
Bartlett (MD)  
Barton (TX)  
Bishop (UT)  
Blackburn  
Blunt  
Boehner  
Bonner  
Boozman  
Boustany  
Brady (TX)  
Broun (GA)  
Brown (SC)  
Burgess  
Burton (IN)  
Buyer  
Calvert  
Camp (MI)  
Campbell (CA)  
Cantor  
Carter

Coble  
Cole (OK)  
Conaway  
Crenshaw  
Cubin  
Culberson  
Davis (KY)  
Davis, David  
Davis, Tom  
Deal (GA)  
Diaz-Balart, L.  
Diaz-Balart, M.  
Doolittle  
Drake  
Dreier  
Duncan  
Ehlers  
Everett  
Fallin  
Feeney  
Ferguson  
Flake  
Fossella  
Fox  
Franks (AZ)  
Frelinghuysen

Ros-Lehtinen  
Ross  
Rothman  
Roybal-Allard  
Ruppersberger  
Ryan (OH)  
Salazar  
Sánchez, Linda  
T.  
Sanchez, Loretta  
Sarbanes  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schmidt  
Schwartz  
Scott (GA)  
Scott (VA)  
Sensenbrenner  
Serrano  
Sestak  
Shays  
Shea-Porter  
Sherman  
Shuler  
Sires  
Skelton  
Slaughter  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (WA)  
Solis  
Space  
Spratt  
Stark  
Stupak  
Sutton  
Tanner  
Tauscher  
Taylor  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Tiberi  
Moran (VA)  
Tierney  
Towns  
Tsongas  
Turner  
Udall (CO)  
Udall (NM)  
Van Hollen  
Velázquez  
Obey  
Visclosky  
Walden (OR)  
Walz (MN)  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters  
Watson  
Watt  
Waxman  
Weiner  
Welch (VT)  
Whitfield (KY)  
Wilson (NM)  
Wilson (OH)  
Wittman (VA)  
Wolf  
Woolsey  
Wu  
Yarmuth  
Young (FL)

Linder  
Lucas  
Lungren, Daniel  
E.  
Mack  
Manzullo  
Marchant  
McCarthy (CA)  
McCaul (TX)  
McCrery  
McHenry  
McKeon  
McMorris  
Rodgers  
Mica  
Miller (FL)  
Miller, Gary  
Moran (KS)  
Murphy, Tim  
Musgrave  
Myrick  
Neugebauer  
Nunes  
Paul

Berman  
Blumenauer  
Cannon  
Davis (IL)  
Melancon

## NOT VOTING—13

Miller, George  
Moore (KS)  
Pence  
Pryce (OH)  
Rush

□ 1816

Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia and Mrs. BONO MACK changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

#### CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-127)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELCH of Vermont) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

#### To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2008.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, in Executive Order 13219 and to Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003,

has not been resolved. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 24, 2008.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

#### SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF THE YEAR OF THE AMERICAN VETERAN

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1098) supporting the goals and ideals of the Year of the American Veteran.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 1098

Whereas there are currently more than 25,000,000 veterans of the United States Armed Forces, residing in the United States; Whereas those who are legally termed “veteran” have served the United States honorably in either times of peace or war;

Whereas by the very nature of their service, veterans have sacrificed, along with their families, in the name of their country;

Whereas the service of veterans has and continues to guarantee the fundamental freedoms afforded to all Americans;

Whereas the American people are grateful and appreciative of the sacrifices made by all veterans, past, present, and future and wish to especially commemorate their service; and

Whereas the Commission on the Future for America's Veterans has designated 2008 as the “Year of the American Veteran”: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages the American people to recognize and acknowledge the sacrifices the American veteran demonstrates in the name of freedom;

(2) encourages the education of the American people on the many great contributions of the American veteran to American society; and

(3) supports the goals and ideals of the Year of the American Veteran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1098 to support the goals and ideals of the Year of the American Veteran.

This resolution encourages the American people to recognize and acknowledge the sacrifices the American veteran demonstrates in the name of freedom; encourages the education of the American people on the many great contributions of the American veteran to American society; and supports the goals and ideals of the Year of the American Veteran.

The Commission on the Future for America's veterans has designated 2008 as the "Year of the American Veteran," and today we are joining them in remembering our veterans.

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution, and for us to strive together to remember our veterans not only this year, but in the years and decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that George Washington over 220 years ago had it right when he said the most important factor in the morale of our fighting troops is the sense of how they are going to be treated when they come home. So we have a job to do for the veterans not only of this war, but of all the previous wars that we have carried out.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, my name is pronounced BOO-er, B-u-y-e-r. It looks like "buyer." The descent is from Alsace-Lorraine, pronounced de BOO-yea, and you just Americanized it. But we refer to it as BOO-er. Thank you.

In the previous debate, Mr. Speaker, I would like the RECORD to properly reflect that the chairman had made a comment with regard to four naming bills that was not accurate at all. I support consideration of this naming bill and three other veterans' naming bills on the schedule today. I do wish to correct the record regarding the statement I understand Chairman FILNER to have made during early consideration of H.R. 2818 that I, quote, "objected to the consideration of the veterans' naming bills today, all four of them."

While I do not think Chairman FILNER intended to dissemble about the matter, I thought I detected his impish grin for which he is so well-known. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I want to make clear that I support the consideration of veterans' naming bills.

I did ask Chairman FILNER by way of my staff director to his to address specific drafting concerns I have about H. Res. 1291 before scheduling the resolution for the suspension calendar today; but that was not done so I will try to clarify the matter on the resolution

with the author of the bill when it is considered.

I also need to clarify for the RECORD in the last debate that in response to Mr. SALAZAR's remarks, my dear friend from Colorado, that "all of these bills were passed through committee."

The only bill which we are considering right now, Mr. Speaker, that was passed through the committee is H. Res. 1098. It was marked up and reported out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. The other seven bills are being brought straight to the floor without committee report or action.

As the ranking member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have an obligation to help ensure that veterans and their families have access to the benefits and services they so richly deserve. More importantly, I have been an advocate for military members and veterans almost my entire life. I have been in uniform with the United States Army Reserves both on and off active duty now for 28 years. For the last 16 years, I have simultaneously served in Congress as I have also been in the Army Reserves. It is a great part of who I am. It is for this reason that I am proud to support H. Res. 1098 which supports the goals and ideals of the Year of the American Veteran.

As the chairman stated earlier today, there are over 25 million veterans in the United States who sacrificed by defending the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, and supporting the ideals of liberty all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes those sacrifices and commemorates the service of veterans in times of peace and war. This resolution also encourages the people of the United States to join the Commission of the Future of America's Veterans in celebrating the year 2008 as the "Year of the American Veteran."

Before we pass this resolution, I believe that my colleagues should also pause for a moment and say why is this Congress bringing this resolution to the floor at this time. I view bringing this resolution to the floor at this time as a continued matter of the chairman attempting to inoculate the majority, inoculate because the Democrats who control this Congress, they want to bring a bill to the floor that would cut a monthly pension to wartime elderly, disabled and indigent veterans in the amount of nearly a billion dollars. So before the Democrats take nearly a billion dollars away from war-time disabled, indigent, homebound veterans, they want to stand and put their arms around veterans and say, We are going to name 2008 the Year of the American Veteran so it makes them look good just before they take a billion dollars from the most vulnerable veterans.

I need to inform not only the Members but the country so they know what this Congress is about to do. I believe it is a matter of principle that the Nation should not be taking money from one group of deserving veterans to fund someone else. In this case, the

attempt is to take this series of dollars and if we adopt what the chairman had done in the full committee, it would be to take nearly this \$1 billion and make these payments that would then go to Filipinos who fought with the United States during World War II. If we pick up what the Senate had done, they take nearly the billion dollars and they spread it out among a number of veterans programs of which a smaller portion then would be with regard to the Filipinos.

I bring that to everyone's attention because the President of the Philippines is in the United States and is here to deliver a resolution that passed through their legislature wanting our country to know that if Mr. FILNER and this Congress is successful, they will not offset any moneys the United States will be sending to the Philippines.

So this matter before the House is very serious. The American people, Mr. Speaker, should know and all Members should clearly know that before we say that 2008 is the Year of the Veteran, we better make sure that is exactly what we mean. That we embrace those ideals before we take nearly a billion dollars and cut that from the very same soldiers that fought right next to those World War II Philippine veterans.

You think about this, we make it a law and say if someone is about to die, well actually, let me rephrase that.

We believe it is shameful and therefore make it against the law to actually go up and put your hand in the pocket of someone who is dead and steal from that person, take money away from them. Well, I think that is right. We should do that.

But then what are we about to do here with regard to these wartime elderly and indigent, homebound veterans whom are the most vulnerable. Many are lying in a bed. They are homebound. They are 60 percent or greater disabled, and now we are saying Congress, we are going to deny that monthly pension that goes to you. We are going to stop it, take it away from you. And oh, by the way, we are going to give it to the living because you are about to die, so we are going to spread it among other veterans, which will be the nonresident alien Filipinos that served valiantly in World War II.

□ 1830

Now, if in fact that's what Congress wants to do, fund it with some other source, don't take it from this vulnerable population. When I talked about what the Senate bill approved—actually, when I referred to it as almost \$1 billion, it's \$912 million in pension benefits for these wartime elderly, indigent, severely disabled, or homebound American veterans. A portion of the funding saved by this unprecedented cut in veterans' benefits would be used to fund, if we followed Chairman FILNER's view, which would be a very oversized pension for World War II Filipino veterans; or if we followed the Senate's

version, we would take those moneys, reduce the size of the pensions and spread it among other veterans. We would be doing this in the very same year in which the chairman is asking we make the Year of the American Veteran.

Now, I suspect that most Americans would be shocked and dismayed that any Member of Congress, regardless of what party they are in, would propose such a drastic cut. But that is exactly what the chairman intends to do very soon.

What is more ironic is that today we are here on the floor to consider this worthy resolution that will recognize this year as the Year of the American Veteran while in the same stroke, this very Congress wants to cut veterans' benefits from the very same people from which we are honoring with this resolution.

The bill that I am referring to is Senate 1315 as amended which passed out of the Senate in April, and a similar bill that I earlier had mentioned is H.R. 760 as amended, which passed the House Committee on Veterans Affairs last July. Both of these bills contain this cut of nearly \$1 billion.

When the Democrat majority passed these bills out of the Senate and out of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, they voted to eliminate, as I said, a special monthly pension for severely disabled veterans over 65 who were receiving pensions for wartime service. This special monthly pension provides an additional payment of up to \$2,200 per year to the most severely disabled veterans.

In 2006, the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims overturned the Department of Veterans Affairs decision that denied the special monthly pension to an 86-year-old legally blind World War II veteran named Robert A. Hartness, who was also receiving a VA pension granted to poor, disabled veterans. The court reversed the VA's denial of benefits to Mr. Hartness and required them to begin paying this monthly pension. The court held that the United States Code requires an award of a special monthly pension to an eligible veteran for VA nonservice-connected disability pension if, in addition to being at least 65 years old, the veteran has a disability rating of at least 60 percent or is permanently housebound.

This, in the Year of the American Veteran, Senate 1315 and H.R. 760 would override the court's decision.

According to the VA, more than 20,200 veterans could be affected by this unprecedented cut in veterans' benefits. This cut in veterans' benefits is opposed by the American Legion, AMVETS, the National Association of Uniform Services, the Gold Star Wives of Americans, and other veterans' service organizations.

The following excerpt is from an April 25, 2008, letter to all Members of Congress: "The American Legion believes the sacrifice of these heroes war-

rants relief. Balancing the books on the backs of the very patriots that protected and defended this Nation is unconscionable. Don't make a grave mistake in the name of fairness, equality, or even fiscal responsibility. Do what is right."

Well, I wholeheartedly agree. Congress has an obligation to protect these vulnerable veterans, and it's because I believe they have no voice, and indeed many of them are so severely disabled, they are housebound, and require aid and attendance.

While I recognize the service of the Filipino veterans of World War II, those who advocate for their compensation should do so from other funding sources. It should not be at the expense of our needy veterans.

I believe that we should not cut benefits from aging veterans who need us most to fund new entitlements. To do so would violate the principle of honor that defined their service and our obligation to both them and the Nation they served.

Mr. Speaker one of the provisions of the resolutions states, "Resolved, that the House of Representatives (1) encourages the American people to recognize and acknowledge the sacrifices the American veteran demonstrates in the name of freedom."

How can the House of Representatives encourage the American people to acknowledge the sacrifices of American veterans when very soon afterwards, this very same Congress that is supposed to represent the people wants to vote to cut nearly \$1 billion from these wartime elderly, indigent, disabled veterans who need it most? We are sending veterans, servicemembers, and the American people the wrong message if we do this.

So I would remind my colleagues who vote in support of this resolution to please recognize that when this legislation may come soon to the floor. Because if my colleagues join me in embracing our Nation's veterans, particularly those who are disabled by sacrifice for the ideals and the heritage of this Nation and truly want to thank them by naming 2008 the Year of the American Veteran, then I ask you do not cut their veterans' benefits if this bill is brought to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution, but I do not support the rationale of continued inoculation and a mixed message that will result in this cut of nearly \$1 billion from these wartime elderly, disabled, and indigent veterans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to close, and I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to support the chairman's resolution.

I yield back all my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, we are debating House Resolution 1098, although the ranking member spent all of his time on a bill called S. 1315 which ear-

lier passed the full Senate by a vote of 96-1. Would 96 Senators support a bill that cuts nearly \$1 billion in special monthly pension benefits for elderly veterans? No, because that's not what S. 1315 does. And in fact, the leader of the minority party, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, voted in favor of this bill; and he said, I certainly believe that we should compensate not only the thousands and thousands of veterans who get the money from the bill but the Filipinos for their brave service to our Nation.

But we are on House Resolution 1098 to honor the Year of the American Veteran. I will tell the Speaker that in the last year and a half of a Democratically led Congress, about \$17 billion of new money came into the VA system to help the health care of our veterans. That is real contribution to health care. That is real contribution to mental health that we need to deal with.

We have thousands and thousands, even though the Department of Defense refuses to admit it, of young men and women coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan with traumatic brain injury and PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. These require months and months, if not years and years, if not decades, of treatment from a grateful Nation for their service. We have put the money in that will begin to do that job.

Of course, our committee has to continue with oversight over bureaucracies that tend to respond rather slowly. But in our Resolution 1098, in our budget which meets the veterans' groups so-called independent budget, which is put together by them, and for the first time in the history of the independent budget for 2 years in a row we exceeded their budget from this Democratic Congress. So the Year of the American Veteran is not just words. It's budget dollars, it's commitment, it's programs, it's support for our brave veterans, like I said, whether from this war or earlier wars.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support House Resolution 1098.

I would also ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. FILNER. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1098.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1231) supporting the goals and ideals of Vietnam Veterans Day and calling on the American people to recognize such a day.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 1231

Whereas the Vietnam War was the longest military conflict in United States history;

Whereas more than 3,000,000 Americans served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War;

Whereas more than 58,000 Americans lost their lives defending the Nation's freedom during the Vietnam conflict;

Whereas 304,000 additional Americans were wounded during the war;

Whereas on March 29, 1973, the last remaining members of the United States Armed Forces withdrew from Vietnam; and

Whereas the United States does not have a national day of recognition specifically for Vietnam veterans: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Vietnam Veterans Day; and

(2) calls on the American people to recognize such a day to remember those men and women who sacrificed their lives defending the Nation in the Vietnam conflict, to recognize the prisoners of war and those members of the Armed Forces who are missing in action, and to honor all Vietnam veterans who served the Nation faithfully to protect its freedom.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This resolution, 1231, supports the goals and ideals of Vietnam Veterans Day. I don't think we have to remind this body that the Vietnam war was a very divisive time in this country. One of the lessons that we should draw from Vietnam is that although we may disagree about a war, as we do about the current one in Iraq, we must never, never disagree about the importance of honoring the service and sacrifice of the men and women who serve our Nation. We must never confuse the war with the warrior. We must never, never forget the warrior.

This war that we are engaging in Iraq is only exceeded in its length by America in the Vietnamese war, the longest conflict in our history. More than 3 million Americans served in southeast

Asia. More than 58,000 Americans lost their lives on the battlefield. Over 300,000 Americans were wounded, and that was at the time of the war itself. We know because we did not honor these heroes when they came home and we did not have the resources in place, especially with regard to mental health, that we inflicted a terrible, terrible future on many of those soldiers.

Half of the homeless on the street tonight are Vietnam veterans. We think that there are more suicides by Vietnam veterans than who died on the original battlefield. That's a terrible, terrible blot on America for not honoring our veterans. And certainly we cannot make the same mistake again with those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

So we have a Vietnam memorial. We must always remember the service and sacrifices. A day of remembrance is a particularly fitting way to remember the painful lessons learned. But we could do some more material things, too, and I hope that the cooperation and goodwill shown by my ranking member at all times will make sure that we up the budget, for example, to deal with the homeless veterans on the street—most of them are Vietnam veterans—that we grant their Agent Orange claims that they have fought for for decades, that we provide some security for them and increase the budget that is aimed at their future as citizens in this Nation.

So yes, let us pass this resolution. But let us move on in the context of the budget and in the context of other legislation to really honor these warriors who, when they came home, did not get that honor.

I will reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) is recognized.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, it looks like "buyer" but it's pronounced BOO-yer. It comes from Alsace-Lorraine, along the Rhine, and it was pronounced de BOO-yea. You just Americanized my name by calling me "Buyer." We sort of Americanized de Buyer as referring to it as BOO-yer. You are now the second Speaker pro tem who has taken the well who has done so.

Perhaps I need to introduce myself to you. So for that, I apologize.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair apologizes and recognizes the gentlemen from Indiana.

□ 1845

Mr. BUYER. I rise in support of House Resolution 1231, a bill which would support the goals and ideals of Vietnam Veterans Day and calls upon the American people to recognize such a day. I thank my colleague, Mr. SHULER of North Carolina, for his efforts in bringing the bill to the House floor.

The American participation in the conflict of Vietnam began in March 1959 and continued until March 29, 1973, when the last remaining members of

the United States Armed Forces were withdrawn from Vietnam. The conflict itself continued until April 30, 1975. During this conflict, considered the longest military conflict in U.S. history, over 3 million veterans answered their Nation's call to duty. More than 58,000 servicemembers lost their lives, and over 300,000 were wounded. This bill would designate for the first time a national day to recognize Vietnam veterans and commend them for their service to a grateful Nation.

While this resolution is belated, it reflects a better perspective on those who served in an unpopular war and who came home to indifference or outright hostility. That was wrong, and today, we acknowledge that our Vietnam veterans deserved much better.

Now, we recognize also that there are some that perhaps did not honor these veterans in the way in which they should have been, but I also want to recognize there were many people in the country that did recognize their service and honor them.

My grandfather was a World War I veteran who was a Legion commander of the post in Francesville, Indiana. My father then later became that very same commander. And I remember, even as a young man, the discussions about Vietnam and the support. And I remember a young man who even babysat for the four kids and later went on to Vietnam, and I remember the discussions.

But I came from a small town, and I don't remember the hostilities. I remember seeing war protesters on TV, and I remember the term "hippy." I didn't even know what that meant, and I remembered all these things happening as a young man in the 1960s and early 1970s. And it was challenging for me because I didn't share that perspective. I wasn't brought up in a family that had the perspective of public protest and war protesting and those of whom would spat upon someone in uniform and treat them in outward disgrace.

I never understood that. I could never get there to understand that. I understand today that those of whom may have done that in the follies of their youth are filled with guilt, and I'm glad that they are overcoming those types of feelings.

And I will embrace what the chairman had just said, when he said never confuse the war with the warrior. And I think he's absolutely right. And so the country had learned some painful lessons with regard to the Vietnam War, and so if you've got challenges, don't take them out on the warrior, and so I embrace the chairman's remarks.

I was trained as a young ROTC cadet at The Citadel by Vietnam veterans, and I hold the Vietnam veteran in pretty high self-esteem because of the challenge that they went through in a guerrilla war. You know, they never lost a battle. Our soldiers didn't lose a battle, but they ended up losing a war. And we